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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/025,812	12/26/2001	Victor Ostromoukhov	36.P147 Div. I	8408
5514	7590	03/16/2004		
FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA NEW YORK, NY 10112			EXAMINER BRINICH, STEPHEN M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2624	

DATE MAILED: 03/16/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/025,812

Applicant(s)

OSTROMOUKHOV, VICTOR

Examiner

Stephen M Brinich

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hN

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 December 2001.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10-14 and 22-26 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 10-14, 22 and 24-26 is/are rejected.
7) ☒ Claim(s) 23 is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claims 10-14 & 24-26/10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 10, lines 11-12, the phrase "wherein each thresholding mask has only a limited number of threshold values" is unclear as to how the number of values is "limited" (e.g. whether it recites a limitation beyond the inherent one that any finite mask array includes only a limited number of elements).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 22 & 24-26/22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kakutani.

Re claims 22 & 24/22, Kakutani discloses (Abstract; Figures 1, 4a-4e, & 5a-5e; column 2, lines 37-58; column 5, lines 16-49) an image halftoning arrangement in which a halftone output is

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determined by comparing input image data to a threshold and diffusing the error between the two values. One of several error diffusion matrices is selected based on the value of the input image data, and the selected error diffusion matrix provides error diffusion weights used in the error diffusion process.

Re claims 25/22 & 26/22, Kakutani discloses (column 29-54) an implementation of this error-diffusion halftone arrangement in the form of stored software running on a computer to process the data of a series of pixels.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 23 & 24-26/23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

5. Claims 10-14 & 24-26/10-14, insofar as they are understood, would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Re claim 23, (and dependent claims 24-26/23), the art of record does not teach or suggest the selection of halftone error

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diffusion weights in accordance with input pixel values so selected as to avoid the formation of regular checkerboard patterns.

Re claim 10, (and dependent claims 11-14 & 24-26/10-14), the art of record does not teach or suggest the selection of one of a set of halftone thresholding masks having a constrained set of threshold values in accordance with the value of the input image data and then comparing the sum of this input image data and an accumulated error value to a threshold from the selected thresholding mask.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kawamura et al. discloses (column 5, line 64 - column 6, line 17) an arrangement for selecting among a plurality of halftone matrices.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen M. Brinich at 703-305-4390. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays 7:00-4:30, alternate Fridays off.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Tech Center 2600 Customer Service center at 703-306-0377.

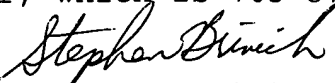
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If attempts to contact the examiner and the Customer Service Center are unsuccessful, supervisor David Moore can be contacted at 703-308-7452.

Faxes pertaining to this application should be directed to the Tech Center 2600 official fax number, which is 703-872-9306.


Stephen M Brinich
Examiner
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smb
March 5, 2004